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ABSTRACT

Highlighting the need for a redefinition and redirection of social services for children and families, this report proposes a new model for social services that can enhance the development of children and the functioning of families. Two essential and interrelated components of the model described and discussed are: (1) supporting and expanding the role and presence of primary services, such as day care and after school programs, art, music and community service activities, parks, libraries, community centers and settlement houses; and (2) redefining social services to include primary as well as specialized services and focusing on communities as the arena in which services can function as a common enterprise. Chapters 1, 2, and 3 examine ways to link primary services with one another and with specialized services so that they function together for children and families. It is suggested that although there are already substantial financial, physical, and human resources invested in specialized and primary services, those services could be enhanced by improving their quality, increasing their variety, and by recruiting, training, and retaining qualified staff. The questions of strategic planning and goal setting for such an enterprise, of evaluating outcomes, and of governance, are discussed in chapter 4. Contains 84 references. (AA)

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